

APPENDIX B

USING SAFE SCHOOLS TO TEACH STUDENTS ABOUT OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

In vocational education, students are required to develop competencies in safety and health relevant to their specific occupational areas. Health and safety training prepares students to understand their rights as specified by law and to take appropriate actions to protect themselves and their co-workers from occupational safety and health hazards. Safe Schools: A Health and Safety Check could be used as one of a number of teaching tools to assist students in attaining competencies related to awareness of safety and health hazards and the federal and state laws designed to minimize these hazards.

While the manual addresses regulations that pertain only to the public workplace, it will acquaint both instructors and students with the types of issues they should be concerned about in the private workplace. Many of the regulations applicable to the public workplace have been adopted verbatim from private worksite regulations. Knowledge of these issues will be relevant immediately to instructors and students involved in cooperative education programs and relevant in the long term to all students in their future workplace.

When using the Safe Schools manual, instructors may be interested in doing the following activities in their classroom:

- ! Select a "question or hazard-of-the-week" from one of the Safe Schools checklists and spend 5-10 minutes each week discussing it with the class.
- ! Spend part of a class period over several days or weeks having the students accompanying the instructor on an assessment of the classroom using the checklists.
- ! Have pairs or groups of students do a hazard assessment using the checklists and report back to the class. Pairs or groups should suggest ways to remediate the problems identified. The checklists may need to be simplified or adapted depending on the students' needs.
- ! Have students identify one or more classroom hazards of concern to them using the hazard index, or divide hazards among the class members. Each student can select a portion of the checklist pertaining to the particular hazard(s), research or obtain additional information on this hazard and lead the rest of the class through a discussion of the hazard and a tour using the appropriate checklist.

APPENDIX B: USING SAFE SCHOOLS TO TEACH STUDENTS

- ! Create a safety and health committee on a school-wide basis, in your classroom, or with several other related classes to work on improving safety and health issues in the classroom and school. Hold an election to have student representation on the committee.
- ! Invite a speaker from a regulatory agency, local business, or professional safety and health organization to discuss safety and health issues relevant to the particular course or program.
- ! Have students read **Appendix C: Tips for Making an Inspection a Cooperative Rather than an Adversarial Experience**. Then let them role-play a mock inspection. Students may take the roles of the inspector and the "inspected" or the teacher may play one of the roles. Have the class critique the experience in terms of how both parties worked toward making the event cooperative rather than adversarial. As an alternative, arrange for an actual inspection to occur during class hours to allow students to participate in the event.

Vocational educators may want to consider using *Occupational Health Awareness: Lessons for Vocational Students in Secondary Schools* as an accompaniment to the Safe Schools manual. This teaching module was developed by the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH) and the Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute (EOHSI). It was designed to help students identify occupational safety and health hazards by conducting hazard assessments at their school and at home. They also learn basic principles for hazard control and how to develop emergency response plans. The teaching module uses a wide range of teaching methods, such as role play, problem solving, discussion, and hands-on experience. Teaching materials include lesson plans, slides, a video, handouts, and sample exams.

Vocational educators may also want to consider using ToxRAP™, an innovative, K-9 curriculum that utilizes concepts from toxicology and environmental health risk assessment. Students learn to identify a problem, gather information, form a hypothesis, conduct experiments, make observations, collect and analyze data, draw conclusions, and defend their conclusions based on scientific evidence. This is accomplished by teaching students how to apply the ToxRAP™ Framework to investigations concerning environmental health problems relevant to their lives. The ToxRAP™ curriculum series includes three modules: Early Elementary/K-3 (*The Case of the Green Feathers*), Intermediate Elementary/3-6 (*What is Wrong with the Johnson Family?*), and Middle School/6-9 (*Mystery Illness Strikes the Sanchez Household*). To order these EOHSI materials, see **Appendix A: Resources**.